

Did You Know? Why Do Catholics Put Up Crucifixes?

Every classroom at UP has a crucifix. Dundon-Berchtold Hall's crucifixes have been donated by UP students, clergy, faculty and staff from their studies, service and travels all over the world. Anywhere you have Catholics, you will have crucifixes, which differ from crosses in that there is a corpus (body) on a crucifix, versus the emptiness of a cross. In light of the Resurrection, many people wonder why anyone would want to gaze on this image of an agonizing death. One answer is that the crucifix helps the beholder remember that God took on flesh to suffer in solidarity with all those who are ill, tortured or stricken in any way. Crucifixes in Catholic hospitals, for instance, help many patients experience a feeling of connection with God that is deeply compassionate, helping them feel a little less isolated. Where the empty cross celebrates a triumph over death, the crucifix helps many people confront the suffering that is part of being human with courage, resilience and hope. The international crucifixes in Dundon-Berchtold are a visceral reminder that there is nowhere on this earth God is unmoved by those in pain.